



## **PUBLIC HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

### **POLICY 11-302**

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Patrick Libbey, Director*

### **PURCHASE AND USE OF CELLULAR PHONES**

This policy applies to Department staff using cellular telephones in the course of conducting County business.

#### **A) Stewardship Applies to Cell Phone Use**

The Department values and expects responsible use of the resources entrusted to the Department and staff.

1. The Supervisor and Department Director approve the purchase and use of cellular telephones for any job classification using criteria for purchase (below).
2. The cellular phone purchase plan is the least expensive plan meeting requirements for job assignment.
3. Staff limit cell phone use to the number of minutes on the plan whenever possible. Staff are trained in how to monitor minutes. Staff who exceed plan minutes, and therefore budgeted cost, of phone use are asked to provide explanation for the excess costs.

#### **B) Criteria for Use Based on Job Assignment**

The Department may purchase cellular telephones for use by staff if the job assignment warrants use of such equipment. Criteria for purchase include:

1. Staff safety – [Refer to Thurston County Accident Prevention and Safety Manual, Document #012.3055: “Communication devices such as radio/cell phones are to be provided to employees when working at remote locations, to enable reporting of dangerous working conditions.”]
2. The job assignment is such that the staff person must be outside the office the majority of the day.

3. The job assignment requires the staff person be available to conduct business while outside the office.
4. Alternatives to cellular telephone are explored, including pager, regular office hours, or other means of conducting County business.
5. The most cost-effective means of conducting County business is by cellular telephone, using government rates for purchase and use.

**C) Safe Use of Phones**

Staff avoid using cellular telephones while driving an automobile.

**D) Personal use of County Cellular Phone**

Staff limit personal use of a County-owned cellular telephone as directed and monitored by their supervisor. The Department expects costs related to excessive personal use to be reimbursed.

**E) Use of Personal Cellular Phones for County Business**

With prior authorization, staff who use their personal cellular telephone in the conduct of County business can claim reimbursement for the expense for work related calls. This is subject to usual County policies for reimbursement of expenses.